

Church Union

News and Views

Organ of the Continuation Committee
of the
South India Joint Committee on Union

Vol. III

MAY 1933

No. 6

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CHURCH UNION

News and Views

Editorial Board

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Special Prayers for South India

Let us pray for the Joint Committee and for the Churches which they represent.

Almighty God, giver of every good gift, we yield Thee hearty thanks that Thou hast put into the minds of Thy people in South India to strive to restore the broken unity of Thy Church; we pray Thee that Thou wilt pour out Thy Holy Spirit on all those who are chosen to take counsel together for this end; take away from them all prejudice and ignorance and grant that being led only by Thy Holy Spirit they may learn Thy will and set forth Thy purpose. And to all those for whom they labour grant such a vision of Thy loving purpose that they may with one heart and one mind draw together to one another in the truth and love of Thy Son Jesus Christ, our only mediator, the Prince of Peace. Amen.

Let us pray for the Churches seeking union.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou who art the Good Shepherd, who didst give Thy life for the sheep that Thou mightest bring them all into Thy one flock: Bless we pray Thee the Churches which in South India are seeking to accomplish Thy purpose that they all may be one: may they bring into a united Church whatever good gift Thou hast vouchsafed to them: increase and multiply upon them in union, the manifold blessings which in their separation Thou hast poured upon them: and grant to them such a spirit of penitence for past blindness and neglect of Thee and such an outpouring of Thy free spirit, that renewed by Thy redeeming love they may let nothing hinder them from uniting in fuller and richer service to Thy honour and glory, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

Let us pray for the Councils and Synods of the Uniting Churches.

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom; grant unto all the Councils and Synods of the Churches which are seeking union in South India the guidance of Thy Holy Spirit, that in all their deliberations and determinations they may perceive and know what things Thou wouldst have them do and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Editorials

Retreats and Conferences

News comes from several different parts of South India reporting the holding of retreats and conferences. Several such reports will be found in this number. In every case not only was there a good attendance reported but also deep interest.

Four of these conferences were held under the supervision of the Joint Committee on Church Union. The first was held in the Telugu country where members of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, the South India United Church, and the Methodist Church met together and discussed problems connected with Union. A deepening of interest and a clearing up of several difficulties have been reported.

Another conference was held in Vellore for the area around Madras. Here too there was a good attendance and a lively interest that was shown in everything. The Lord's Supper was celebrated on three successive mornings as was the case in the Joint Committee meetings themselves.

A special conference for women was held in Palamcottah. It was a real inspiration on the part of the ladies that they should ask for such a conference and the results have been far beyond expectation. Groups of women came from Travancore, Tinnevely, Madura and Trichinopoly and fellowshiped together for three days. During the course of the meeting the Bishop of Tinnevely administered the Lord's Supper at which all members of the conference were present. One result of this conference is that the ladies are asking that there shall be another conference and promise that there will be an even larger attendance if one is held.

Another retreat was held at Pasumalai for four days in April. The Bishop of Dornakal was the President. This conference has been meeting for a dozen years and has during most of those years discussed questions relating to Church Union. Occasionally other subjects have been taken. This year the subject was 'The Spiritual Benefits of Church Union' and the conference discussed the aspects of union relating to Christian Fellowship, the Sacraments, and Worship. Much time was given for discussion and there was a very delightful fellowship between meetings.

The Lord's Supper was celebrated on the morning of the first day and practically all members of the Conference partook thereof. The Rev. W. H. Spencer conducted Bible Readings each morning and these were very helpful in producing the right spirit throughout the meetings.

Another conference was held in Nagercoil which was not sponsored by the Joint Committee, but due to the Chairman of that district, Rev. John A. Jacob, M.A., B.D. All the workers of that area were gathered together and a large number of the local people also were present. Visiting speakers had been invited and some of the fundamental principles of union were discussed. It is reported that a new spirit has been created in South Travancore and that a large section of the membership of the Church has now become interested in this movement.

Other conferences are being planned for the Malayalam and the Kanarese areas and it has become perfectly evident that there must be a larger number of these conferences during the next year where men and women can get together in genuine Christian fellowship and discuss both their differences and likenesses in order that they may come into a deeper spiritual union with their Lord and Master and with one another.

Meditation and Intercession

The Publication Committee of the Joint Committee on Union is issuing a pamphlet on 'Meditation and Intercession for Union of Christ's Church together with short prayers for union for public and private use'. This pamphlet may be obtained from the Christian Literature Society. It is hoped that every pastor in the three uniting Churches will not only obtain copies of this pamphlet on meditation and intercession and use them in his own central congregation but that he will also obtain sufficient quantity for use in all the village chapels and prayer houses. It is suggested that in every place of worship in the three Churches a few minutes at least, on one Sunday each month, be set apart for this meditation and intercession. Each pastor may send out instructions to all assistants notifying them as to what sections shall be used and at what Sunday they should use them. It would be well if each pastor determined a certain Sunday each month for such united prayer. We must think and pray our way through this whole problem of Union. We shall never get to the final goal unless we use this instrument unto its uttermost. Jesus Christ Himself has taught us that we should gather together and ask for things in common and has promised that if we agree on such matters He would hear our

prayer. Let us therefore make good use of these prayers and meditations in order that there may be a united voice ascending from the whole of our South India area which will make for union and which will bring forth God's own answer through His Holy Spirit.

The Depression and Union

No Church Union can be based upon merely external or material foundations. Unless our union is in Christ Jesus Himself it will be but a temporary coming together with a certain break again afterwards. We must gather together around the Cross and there find the very center of our whole spiritual life in Jesus Christ Himself.

It is true, however, that though our central purpose may be high and lofty there are many other minor motives that enter into any object that we pursue. It is true, therefore, that this time of financial depression is putting an additional urge upon the necessity for Church Union. All the Mission bodies in South India have been cut in their appropriations. They do not now have the money they had formerly for their regular work. Some forms of work have had to be cut down. The Indian Church has itself been seriously hit in its financial income. All around us there is suffering and lack of work. It seems that it could not be otherwise but that God is trying to show us that we cannot depend upon material things for the work of His Kingdom, but must depend upon higher and more spiritual things.

But quite apart from that the mere fact that we each no longer have the money that we would like to have, the situation rather urges that we ought to pool all our resources in order that the work itself may suffer as little as possible. There are cases, especially in the larger cities, where two congregations could profitably unite and together support a larger work than the two can support now in separation. There still are plenty of churches in the smaller towns belonging to different denominations which could well unite and save the funds necessary for the work and the work would not be decreased because of such union but would be increased. God is calling us through even these difficulties to get together and use His resources unto the uttermost.

Letter on Episcopal Synod Resolutions

OXFORD, ENGLAND

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR DR. BANNINGA,

I have studied the 'Proceedings and Record of Decisions' of the Episcopal Synod and General Council Standing Committee of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, relative to the latest draft of the Proposed Scheme of Union. I have also talked with several well-informed friends belonging to the non-Episcopal Churches concerned in the Scheme, men loyal both to their special principles and to the large-minded ideal which the Scheme implies. My resulting impressions, up to date, are as follows: and I pass them on to you forthwith, in case they may be of some use to the readers of *Church Union—News and Views*, in defining their own attitude towards certain interpretations of the present Draft and suggestions for change in its wording, which the above body of Anglican comment contains.

First, I recognise, and would ask all concerned to bear in mind, that the 'Decisions' in question are not an ultimatum but a series of instructions to the Anglican members of the Joint Committee on points as to which the instructions already given them have not yet led to agreed findings by that Committee which wholly meet the case from the Anglican standpoint. Similarly I recognise that a somewhat similar list of *desiderata* from the non-Anglican, and especially the Congregational standpoint, will have to be done fuller justice to *before the best possible* scheme, on the lines of *comprehension* of the *positive* convictions on all sides such as is aimed at, finally emerges from the labours of the Joint Committee.

Second, to this end it is vital that all should shun, like poison, all hasty, sweeping, or pessimistic judgment and speech as to anything now put forward being 'the end of all things' as regards possible Reunion. Let each individual and group state frankly, but calmly and in fraternal spirit, the points it thinks of *positive* value for such a united Church as all, by the Basis of Union, have agreed is the ideal to be aimed at; and then go on trusting the Joint Committee, with its own more intimate mutual knowledge and confidence, to find a practical way of satisfying consciences all round, even more fully than they have done to such an unparalleled degree hitherto. For let there be no mistake about it, their work is really *a new thing* in Churchmanship, resting as it does on a Basis of principles, as regards harmonizing unity and conscience, such as has never before been adopted in efforts at really comprehensive Church

Union. Let us all, then, be very patient, loving to our neighbour's conscience, and hopeful of his responding in fair measure.

This said, on the attitude and temper in which these Anglican suggestions and *desiderata* should be considered on all sides, I need say but little at this stage on those about which I and the friends with whom I have exchanged views feel, and expect non-Anglicans in India to feel, real difficulty. For on the chief of them, Decision 7, I have reason to expect that a fresh, explanatory statement will appear very soon in India, which will, I hope, go far to reassure non-Anglicans that it was not meant in as exclusive a sense as it probably seems to them to imply. *After* that has appeared will be the time to say more, if needful, on this Decision—an interpretation of the Pledge which, as it stands, may well appear to many to jeopardize the whole Scheme as understood by non-Episcopalians. Meantime I would add, on the positive side, that I, and others who like me are concerned that the united Church's doctrine should really express the corporate consciousness of that Church as a whole, recognise that Decision 3 contains a suggestion which should satisfy all concerned; since it does *not* give to the *Bishops alone* the power in question, but reserves to each of the three elements of the Synod the final power of veto on fresh definition of Faith and Order. That the bishops should have the sole responsibility for issuing, as the primary ordinary teaching authority, other less formally binding declarations of doctrine *ad hoc*, seems to belong to the very idea of their office.

Finally, in order to make clearer my present view of the 'Decisions' as a whole, and speaking as one who has devoted most of his life to the study of early Church History, I should deprecate any form of statement on Confirmation which committed the whole united Church to the belief that in it 'a special gift of the Holy Spirit is bestowed', in any sense corresponding to what we read of in Acts VIII; or in fact that it be treated as other than one of alternative forms of personal confession of spiritual union with Christ, thus 'fulfilling' the status conferred in Baptism and qualifying for the full Church fellowship of Holy Communion. Further I still regard as more in keeping with emphasis on representatively corporate Church action, and so with the spirit of the whole Scheme, the practice which Decision 6 deprecates.

But my first and last word would be this. There is, in my opinion, nothing disloyal to the basic principles of the Draft Scheme intended in these 'Decisions', and therefore the suggestions contained in them, are entitled to consideration in an equally temperate but thorough spirit.

Yours sincerely,
VERNON BARTLET.

A French Paper Speaks¹

Under the heading 'Quelques problèmes de l'Inde' the *Revue Missionnaire* speaks of the Church Union Movement, and after giving a brief historical survey, it goes on to say 'It may be said that the movement is just now at a decisive stage. We have here upon the horizon a very important event in the history of Evangelical Missions. For if the United Church of South India is definitely formed it will certainly be that within a few years the Christians of India will begin to interest themselves in other unions. The American Methodists and the Lutherans have not as yet participated in the movement toward union in the North India Church, but are stirring themselves along this line. After India comes possibly, Persia etc., but our generation will certainly not see all this.

'It should not be thought that this is viewed with an easy optimism, for there are still obstacles—possibly unsurmountable obstacles—in the future road of the United Church for which thousands of Indian Christians pray regularly. In the discussions which we read in the religious journals of India we gather that, for the moment, the interest centers in the idea of the Episcopate. Anglicans regret that, on the demand of Christians of the Congregationalist form of government, they are forced to limit the authority of the Bishop as far as possible: though happily the Roman Catholic idea of the Episcopacy does not here enter in. At the other extreme one suspects a too great rigidity not in the actual conception of the ministry, but in that conception which may well arise in the future. It may be thought also that the opposing tendencies of conservatives and liberals may come into collision in the course of the final negotiations. Let us wish with the Indian laity that the new Church if it comes to maturity will put off all the traditions and rules of the past which are without value for the present and develop an abundance of life, joy and spiritual freedom. Those who wish to follow recent and future discussions, are referred to a fine Review (*Church Union—News and Views*) all but entirely given over to the problem of Christian unity as it presents itself in India. Friends of Missions will follow with warm sympathy the latter phases of the effort of the Churches of South India—(Sd.) A. S.'

The Free Church President on Union

From 'The British Weekly'

The Rev. James Lockhart, in his Presidential address at Sheffield, spoke with persuasive eloquence on 'The Free Churches and Some Immediate Tasks.' No pronouncement from the chair has sounded a clearer

¹ Translated by Mrs. C. S. Vaughan

note of leadership. The President concentrated his hearers' attention on a few living issues, and among them was the relation of English Nonconformity to the movement for Church Union. When a preacher of Mr. Lockhart's large experience describes Union as 'the master-word of to-day,' we may be certain that the Scottish and Methodist examples will one day be followed by other denominations. 'These were not soft metal or easy bodies to unite,' as the President reminds us.

'They united not primarily on grounds of policy, but on the ground of hard-formed conviction that their union was according to the will of God, a moral duty, and sound ecclesiastical wisdom. We rejoice with joy abounding and much praise to God, that three denominations—Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist—have appointed committees to confer with each other. These Churches took their rise at much the same time, and have flowed together for three centuries, at changing distances from each other. Towards the end of the last century their antagonisms began to die down and they came into fellowship and co-operation. There is sufficient identity between them to justify hopeful expectations of a happy ending of their separations. We believe that in each of these Churches there will be the will to unite, and that differences will be compared and appraised with the charity that never faileth. Other Churches will not intrude on their counsels, that their decision may be spontaneous and with conviction, but they will follow their negotiations with watchful sympathy and earnest intercessions.'

Reports of Conferences

The Action taken by the South India Methodist Provincial Synod on Church Union

- (a) The Synod received and adopted the report of the committee.
- (b) The Synod received and carefully considered the resolutions on Church Union passed by the District Synods, and adopted the following resolutions:
 - (i) This Synod rejoices greatly at the manifest progress made by the Joint Committee in preparing the Scheme of Union for the three negotiating Churches in South India, and gives thanks to God for the way in which difficulties continue to be solved. It offers heart-felt praise to God that the Day of Prayer for Church Union was so widely observed, and especially that a decisive step was taken at the communion

services, held in response to the appeal of the last Provincial Synod, which enabled the Joint Committee to meet in true unity of the Spirit at the table of our common Saviour and Lord, thus making a sacred bond which this Synod prays may never be broken.

(ii) As the Scheme has now been published in a form it is likely to retain till union is consummated, though details may be changed, this Synod believes the time has come when all the negotiating Churches should show their willingness to enter into the union outlined in the Scheme, as the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon has done. It therefore approves of the Scheme as providing a way by which the three Churches may unite, and declares its willingness to enter the union, provided the Methodist Conference and the people of our Church in India give their consent. (Vote—38 *for*, 5 *against*, 1 *neutral*.)

(iii) This Synod recognises that our people need further information regarding the Scheme, and that there are those who at present are opposed to it, but whom we most earnestly desire to bring with us. The Synod therefore urges the District Synods to continue the methods of information and education by means of retreats and informal gatherings, by which our people may obtain a knowledge of the Scheme and its implications, and be encouraged to study the teaching of the New Testament regarding the Church and its unity. (Vote—37 *for*, 4 *against*.)

(iv) This Synod, while bearing in mind the fact that the Methodist Conference has declared that the ultimate decision regarding church union lies with the Indian Church, yet respectfully asks the Methodist Conference to declare whether the Scheme, though not necessarily in its final form, offers a possible means of securing union, and to give its general approval to it, provided it is accepted by the Synods and circuits in South India. (Vote—44 *for*, 1 *against*, 1 *neutral*.)

(v) This Synod requests its delegates to secure the insertion of the following note in the Basis of Union at the foot of page 7, with a symbol after the word 'episcopacy' in line 11 :

The Methodist Church in accepting episcopacy wishes it to be clearly understood that it regards it as only a method of church government, holding that there is but one order of the ministry with various functions, the bishop being *primus inter pares*. (Vote 39 *for*, 5 *against*.)

(vi) This Synod appoints the following committee to watch the movement during the year, and to take such action as it may deem necessary: The Chairman and Secretary of the Provincial Synod, the

Chairmen of the four Districts, Rev. J. S. M. Hooper, J. W. S. Rangaswamy, S. A. Vedanayagam, J. J. Ellis, N. G. Ponnaiya, P. S. Rangaramanujam, F. C. Sackett, J. G. Bennett, Frank Whittaker, E. L. Anantarao, W. H. Thorp, W. E. Tomlinson, M. B. Taylor, M. Mehta, P. Gurushanta, Miss Anstey, Messrs. S. Gnanaprakasam, W. Jeevaratnam, P. K. Mon Singh, J. R. Sivasubramaniam and H. Gulliford (Convener).

(vii) This Synod appoints the following persons to be the delegates to the Joint Committee, if a meeting is held this year, and to be the sub-committee to consider the questions concerning Church Union which the Home Committee desires to discuss with the Synod—Revs. W. H. Spencer, J. S. M. Hooper, W. A. Sandford, C. W. Posnett, J. G. Bennett, W. E. Tomlinson, P. S. Rangaramanujam, N. G. Ponnaiya, E. L. Anantarao, P. Gurushanta, Messrs. S. Gnanaprakasam, P. K. Mon Singh, W. Jeevaratnam, W. H. Warren and H. Gulliford (Convener).

If any of the above are unable to attend, the following are appointed substitutes: Revs. M. B. Taylor and Frank Whittaker for European ministers; Revs. S. A. Vedanayagam and M. Mehta for Indian ministers; and Messrs. J. R. Sivasubramaniam and Ragland Thomas for laymen.

Church Union Conference, Nagercoil

By Rev. J. A. JACOB, M.A., B.D., Nagercoil

Although the problem of union has been before the Churches connected with the S.I.U.C. for the last 14 years, the South Travancore London Mission Churches have not had an opportunity to discuss thoroughly this problem and especially the 'Proposed Scheme of Union' either in the annual meetings of the Church Council or in special conferences and express their views. One of the reasons for this is the fact that we in South Travancore are obsessed with many internal problems that vitally affect our Churches in South Travancore. Moreover the problem of 'union' is not so real to us because the Christian community in South Travancore belong largely to the London Missionary Society. The Salvation Army and the Lutherans are the only two other Missions working in South Travancore and we do not have much prospect of union with them in the near future. The South India United Church of which we are a part has been negotiating union with the Anglicans and the

Wesleyans and we have not given much thought, neither have our thoughts been crystallised from the various issues involved in the matter. We were hoping that Rev. M. Peter, the President of the S.I.U.C. would be able to attend the Pastors' Conference last month and discuss this matter with them. But unfortunately he was not able to come and the conference had to be postponed.

The Nagercoil District Conference on Church Union was arranged by the Nagercoil District Council, with a view to afford opportunity for the District Workers and Christian leaders especially in the District to devote full three days to discuss this problem of union. The long expected conference was held in the Nagercoil Home Church from April 4 to 6. We were very fortunate in having with us as leaders three members of the Joint Committee on Union, Dr. J. J. Banninga, M.A., D.D., of Pasumalai, Rev. M. Peter, the President of the General Assembly and Rev. M. S. Taylor, B.D., Secretary of the General Assembly. In addition to these we were very fortunate in having with us Mr. P. A. Thangaswami, B.A., M.L., the Secretary of the Tinnevely Diocesan Council. More than 400 delegates mustered strong to hear the Scheme of Union explained and to ask questions and to discuss the problem with the leaders. As Tamil was the medium of discussion many were able to take part.

In the morning session of April 4th, Dr. Banninga dealt very ably with the subject '*The Church in the Mind of Christ.*' He began by saying that Christ came to found the kingdom of God and commanded his disciples to go to the ends of the world to preach the Gospel of repentance and proclaim the coming kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit descended on the group of Christians who formed members of the early Church. He narrated instances from the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles how the disciples were interpreting the mind of Christ to the people of their generation and the Church grew in strength. He ended by saying that in all our discussions we ought to have the conception of the Church as emphasised by Christ and we must try to conform ourselves to the mind of Christ.

Rev. M. Peter narrated the story of the '*Church Union Movement in India*', how God has blessed this movement which started in a small evangelistic conference held in Tranquebar in 1919. He showed clearly how if this union between the Anglican and non-Anglican Churches become successful in South India, it is bound to affect the whole

of Christendom. In the discussions that followed doubts were expressed whether Episcopacy was the best form of government. Mr. Thangaswami of Palamcottah was requested to narrate the principles of the Tinnevely Diocesan Constitution and the functions of the Bishop in the Diocese of which he is the Secretary. In a simple but arresting manner he disarmed all opposition by explaining the functions of the Bishop who is set apart to go round the churches to quicken the spiritual life of the people and he is neither the 'autocratic' bishop of the Middle Ages nor the monarchic bishop of the 4th century.

In the next day the problem was discussed purely from the point of view of Travancore. On the subject '*Church Union and South Travancore*' four speakers led the discussion. Mr. D. M. Devasahayam, B.A., B.D., and Rev. J. E. Kesari, M.A., contended that they could not subscribe to the proposed scheme of union, because organic union is not necessary and that we in Travancore are not concerned with this problem at all. Rev. J. A. Jacob, M.A., B.D., and Rev. J. N. Ambrose on the other hand strongly emphasised the fact that our union was absolutely necessary with the Christians beyond the Ghauts, and that the proposed scheme is the basis on which these three negotiating Churches can safely unite. They also explained clearly that all the congregational principles which we hold so sacred are preserved in the United Church, and tried to remove all the fears entertained by some of the delegates. Dr. G. A. Cox helped us by giving his experience about the church organization in China.

The last day was devoted to the subject '*The Resultant Church*'. Rev. M. Peter, Rev. J. N. Ambrose and Mr. P. A. Thangaswami, B.A., M.L., and Mr. A. Gnanasikhamony, B.A., B.L., led the discussion. When it was explained fully how the resultant Church will be an evangelical Church proclaiming the Gospel of salvation with a united front and how the Congregational, Presbyterian and Anglican elements will be conserved in the resultant Church, there was a general feeling that such a union will be good not only for the churches in South Travancore, but all the churches in South India.

Rev. J. A. Jacob thanked in the name of the delegates the speakers who came from outside Travancore and the speakers from South Travancore who took so much pains to read papers on the subjects assigned to them and take part in the discussion. It is hoped that another conference may be held in Trivandrum within a few months.

Women's Conference on Church Union

By Miss G. E. CHANDLER, Madura

The first Women's Conference on Church Union was held in Palamcottah, April 7-10. Miss New of the C.M.S. was the prime mover of the plan and the success of it was largely due to her thought and care in regard to the programme.

The representation of delegates was as follows :

Madura	...	...	...	...	16
Trichinopoly Methodists	10
Church of England	3
South Travancore	15
Tinnevely Diocese	20

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The delegates found themselves most comfortably housed in one of the hostels of St. John's College with a chapel close by for all devotional meetings. The Bishop of Tinnevely opened the Conference with a very direct appeal that the mind of the Conference be concentrated on three questions: 1st, What are the fundamental things that will make real union possible? 2nd, What are non-essentials in the creation of a real spirit of unity? 3rd, What can the groups represented contribute to each other?

Many of the women had assembled with very little idea as to the history of the movement and the process of development which represents thirteen years of thought and effort. This was most carefully explained to them by Rev. Meshach Peter, the President of the S.I.U.C. Assembly, on the first morning. Following this, the Conference broke up into groups, each of which had special questions given to it for discussion and report.

These reports were the basis of a general discussion on the second afternoon, which brought out many differences of opinion and many varying desires. As is usual when such groups get together for the first time

there was much ignorance of forms and practices used in the Churches represented, and there were those for and against the constitutional episcopacy suggested in the scheme, the use of a common Book of Prayer, insistence on too much repetition of creeds as against a life that bears witness to a belief in Jesus Christ. As the purpose of this discussion was largely educative no attempt was made to draw up a resolution of formulate findings on any of these questions but the fact that the discussions continued informally in a frank friendly spirit showed that the stimulation received had been healthy and vigorous.

The second day closed with a talk by Miss Chandler of Madura on 'Women's place in the Church after Union'. She stressed the fact that the Christian home would still be the most powerful factor in the Church and in that home the mother while contributing the element of steadiness and stability must also watch the interests that flow in and out and turn the hopes and aspirations of growing young people where life and service were needed and not into channels blocked with tradition and superstition. She pleaded for a greater use in the Church of young women when enthusiasm and sincerity of purpose often brought the courage which resists all dangers. She also pointed out how much aid experienced teachers could give to pastors in watching over and supervising the religious education and development of young people.

Sunday was truly a day when religious experiences were shared. All attended the Communion Service and then later met to hear three of the delegates tell in a very personal way of 'What my worship means to me,' and in the afternoon came a most stirring talk by Miss Joy Solomon on 'Women and Evangelistic Work'. It was again the sharing of her own life among India's poorest and most needy which brought a challenge not easy to forget. The conference closed with a Thanksgiving service and when the groups separated on the following morning the common expression of the heart was 'We must do this again'. There is no doubt that these women will bring Church Union more definitely into the thought life of their homes and communities.

The Retreat at Pasumalai, 1933

The twelfth Retreat and Conference of Ministers and Laymen was held at Pasumalai, South India, April 18-21. Heretofore these conferences have had a great part in creating a larger and stronger fellowship among the Churches of South India, and this was one of the best from that point of view. That it did reach a large number of the leaders of the Churches is evident from the registration, which was as follows:—

The Church of India, Burma and Ceylon	...	...	...	45
The Wesleyan Methodist Church	...	...	...	9
The Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church	...	...	...	5
The South India United Church	...	Malabar Council	...	5
		North Tamil Council	...	7
		Travancore Council	...	18
		Madras Council	...	6
Other Churches	...	Telugu Council	...	3
		Madura Council	...	50

More than one-third were lay delegates. We wish that their numbers had been larger, for the Churches cannot meet the needs and opportunities which face them these important times unless the ministry and the laity are in close unity of mind and effort. There were also a small group of women in faithful attendance, for which we are sure every one was glad.

The subject of this year's conference was 'The Spiritual Blessings of Union,' and the Rt. Rev V. S. Azariah, D.D., Bishop of Dornakal, was the president. The subject was wisely chosen, for it was evident that it satisfied the mood and expectations of those in attendance. So much time and thought has been given to the things that have separated the Churches, and which make it difficult for them to unite. Also much prayerful negotiation has gone into the effort to overcome them. The 'Scheme of Union' is the result. It has been discussed with profit in previous meetings of this conference. It seems as if about all that could be done through negotiation has been done. We now await the coming of the Holy Spirit in such measure as to fuse the Churches into that vital union of which the 'Scheme' can only be a means. The blessings of such fusion,

we all felt as we looked over into the promised land, before crossing the borders thereof, and knew for a season, those blessings of fellowship which a closer union would surely make the Churches' permanent possession.

This fellowship manifested itself most fully at that time and place which alone can fully satisfy a Christian heart—at the Lord's Table. Early on the first morning of the Conference, Holy Communion was celebrated in the church. Dr. J. J. Banninga and Rev. G. P. James administered the sacrament to nearly all the members of the Conference and to many of the workers of the Madura Church Council who were attending their 'Institute' those days. The order of service was the one especially prepared for the Communion services held at meetings of the Joint Committee on Union. So far as the writer knows, no one stayed away for reasons of conscience. On the other hand, in the meetings that followed, many referred to this Communion service as the most blessed experience of Christian fellowship that had ever come into their lives. We must believe that the permission given by the bishops of the Anglican Church for the practice of inter-communion on such occasions is indeed ratified by the Lord who alone is the Host at His Table.

The President of the Conference, Bishop Azariah, in his opening address reviewed the testimony of the New Testament as to what Christ intended His Church to be. The discussion that followed gave evidence that the actual condition of the Churches in South India was far below that ideal. During the following three days short addresses were made on the various ways in which the Churches could actually express their fellowship in Christ, and receive all the benefit and power that must come therefrom. Some of the men whose names were on the programme were not present, and their places were taken by those who did not have time to prepare. The results of such spontaneity, and the eager participation in the discussion periods was certainly impressive evidence of the longing in the hearts of Christian leaders for the speedy coming of a more full and fruitful fellowship in the Christian life of South India. 'Why wait?' 'What hinders?' was the constant overtone of most of what was said. Even in that realm, hitherto so fruitful of divisions—the realm of *thinking* concerning Christian life and experience, Rev. G. T. Simeon of Palamcottah, and Dr. Banninga of Pasumalai, challenged us to enter into one another's minds, with a loving desire to find light and truth there, rather than darkness and error. There is a vast reward for everyone who seeks to know a fellow Christian's thinking with such desires behind him.

When such workers as Rev. L. Nilsson of the Swedish Lutheran Mission, Dr. S. Jesudason of the Tirupattur Ashram, and Rev. C. E. Wolsted of the Madura Mission, told us of white harvests in the fields of evangelism, or of the needs of the millions among whom we dwell for help in the struggles against evil customs, disease, poverty, ignorance and injustice, we knew that we can never fully meet those needs divided amongst ourselves and more or less heedless of the necessity for real fellowship in the Master's service.

The last two days were given over to the consideration of how greater fellowship may be ours in the life of the Church—in its sacraments and worship. Rev. J. A. Jacob of Nagercoil, Rev. A. M. Hollis of Nazareth, Rev. Paulraj Thomas of Pasumalai, Rev. John Asirvatham of Palamcottah and Rev. R. Robertson of Coimbatore read papers clearly setting forth the principles and practices of their respective Churches. Each speaker by his very honesty and clarity in setting forth what his Church considered most essential and precious, made the rest of us realize that we had much in common with him. When the intent in speaking of the sacraments and forms of worship is to show how God meets the soul in them, and not to judge one another through them, we recognize the breadth and the depth of the unity of the Body of Christ, which is His Church. Just as the President expressed his glad surprise when he realized the extent of our mutual understanding and fellowship here in South India, so many others knew that the inner spirit so essential to the success of any outward scheme of union was growing in our midst.

It is for this reason that our Churches are deeply indebted to all those who have made these conferences in Pasumalai possible during the past years. They have added immensely to our knowledge and appreciation of one another as Christian believers, and to the growth of a living unity in our area. It would certainly be profitable if similar conferences could be conducted all over India, where new friendships could grow in the brotherly atmosphere of a common hostel and dining hall; where plenty of time is provided for the give and take of discussion after the prepared addresses. And most of all, where our hunger for a closer fellowship could be satisfied and hallowed at the table of the Lord, who prayed in the very crisis of His life for our vital abiding unity.

A. A. MARTIN.

Articles

The Church in the Mind of Christ

The word '*Church*' (*ecclesia*) as applied to the community of the followers of Jesus Christ is distinctly post-Pentecostal. Of the 115 places in which the word occurs in the New Testament, 112 are *after* the second chapter of Acts. The other three are in St. Matt. xvi and xviii.

To discover therefore the mind of Christ concerning the Church is apparently not an easy task. We can never profess to know fully the mind of our Lord except in so far as He has Himself revealed it in words or deeds during His earthly sojourn. The fact that the term is almost never found in the recorded words of our Lord ought to warn us against expecting positive and clear indications of His mind in this direction.

From this silence, some scholars¹ have jumped to the conclusion that the Lord Himself never founded any new religious community and that the conceptions centering round the Church, the Sacraments or the ministry were all evolutions by the Apostles and notably by St. Paul.

The demand for clear evidence in the pre-resurrection Gospel narratives for institutions, rites and doctrines that are only possible *after* the resurrection is clearly a most unreasonable demand. To look for an exposition of these topics in the teaching of our Lord, and to reject the evidence for these in the literature of the post-resurrection period is as unreasonable as to demand indications of modern scientific discoveries in the inspired pages of the Old and New Testaments. Moreover, the Mind of Christ is certainly revealed also by the Spirit of Christ, who was sent to guide the Apostles into all truth, and the words and deeds of these first Apostles cannot be ignored in our endeavour to know the Mind of the Master.

Having warned ourselves of this restriction, we may now begin to consider the topic 'The Church in the Mind of Christ'. It will be our task to see if we can discover in the teachings and doings of our Lord any justification for the content that the early Christian teachers put into the word *Ecclesia*.

This ground has been so fully worked out by several notable writers that originality is well nigh impossible. Hort's *Christian Ecclesia*, Hamilton's *People of God*, Robertson's *Regnum Dei* and Headlam's

¹ E. G. Schiedal in his article on the Ministry in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*

Bampton Lectures are scholarly treatises to which not much new matter can be added. In my presentation of the subject here I borrow freely from the writings of these authors.

Jesus Christ did not come into a religious vacuum. He was born into a community that claimed to be the People of God. He came into a people with a keen expectation of a coming Messiah. This community was one with whom God was believed to have entered into a Covenant so that He was their Shepherd, King and God; and they His flock, His subjects and His peculiar possession. He was in their midst, and had meant them to be His messengers and witnesses to all the nations of the world. For at least five hundred years they had been told by God's prophets that He had appointed them to be a light to the Gentiles and to be God's salvation unto the end of the earth (Is. xlix. 6). They had been told that theirs would be a world-embracing community, including in it all the nations of the earth, and that people speaking all the languages of the world would come and say: 'We will go with you, for God is with you' (Zech. viii: 23). They were to look forward to the time when Zion would be the city of God—which Egypt, Babylon, Philistia, Tyre and Ethiopia would all love to claim as their own spiritual mother (Ps. lxxxvii). This golden age was to be ushered in by the coming of their King—the Messiah, who would redeem them and set them free for their world-mission.

Into a community with such a mental prepossession as this, Jesus came. He sowed the Word, proclaimed the coming Kingdom and showed Himself by many signs that He was their Saviour and Messiah. If only this whole nation had recognised the spiritual character of the old prophetic messages, if only they had eyes to see that their Messiah would be a lowly King riding upon an ass, as Zechariah had taught them; 'the Servant of God' as Isaiah had told them—the Servant whose voice would not be heard in the streets, who would preach good tidings to the poor, would bind up the broken-hearted and proclaim liberty to the captives; if only they had believed that their King would be One who would grow up as a tender plant, as a root out of a dry ground, a Man of sorrows, One who would identify Himself with sinners and transgressors. I say if only the Jews had recognised this, they would have continued to be the Messiah's people of God and the vehicle of His light and knowledge to all the nations of the earth.

But alas, the people of God as a whole failed, failed to understand the Scriptures and recognise the Messiah when He came. 'He came unto His own, and His own received Him not,' 'A remnant' only

had eyes to see and hearts to understand what was happening before them. How many these were it is impossible to ascertain. Twelve certainly, and probably seventy, and very likely about one hundred and twenty—(Acts i : 15) and perhaps over five hundred at one time or another belonged to this Remnant. (1. Cor. xv : 6). These constituted the first disciples of Jesus Christ.

How were these gathered and held together? They had heard the call of Jesus to follow Him; loyalty and attachment to His person was their uniting bond. They had followed Him, and in following Him had denied themselves and taken up their cross; had confessed Him before men and were not ashamed of Him; had for His sake and for the Gospel's sake left their earthly possessions and the closest human ties and had undertaken to publish abroad the Kingdom of God (Lk. ix : 60) and were prepared even to follow Him unto death.

It is clear from the Gospels that the last year of His ministry was spent very largely in the company of these followers. From the moment of Peter's great Confession, the life and teaching of Christ both move in a new direction. Great demands are now made on His followers. They are told that they must be prepared to lose their lives even as their Master would lose His. The servant cannot expect to be above the Master. Henceforth they are treated as a single unit and are given joint authority to be His representatives in carrying on the proclamation of the Kingdom. They are now trusted with His cause and He identifies Himself with them: what is done to them will be reckoned as done to Him, whether of help rendered or hatred shown. They are called 'the little Flock, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom' and He says He appoints them a Kingdom even as the Father appointed one unto Him. Into this Kingdom will come many from the East and West and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; for this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world. They are an organization similar to a Kingdom, and among them there would be rulers and leaders. Their rulers however would be ministers; their leaders, servants; their great ones would seek to be the least among them. In the night He was betrayed He tells them that with desire He has desired to eat the last Passover with them because He wanted to commit to them certain mysteries of the Kingdom. To them He reveals that His Body is to be given *for* them. His Blood is to be shed *for* them and *for* many. It will be the blood of the new Covenant spoken of by Jeremiah. This new age will be inaugurated by His Death. This rite they are to keep up 'In remembrance of Me.'

The Fourth Evangelist speaks also of the mystic relationship between the Lord and His disciples, as something vital, real and eternal. He and they together form one true Vine: 'I am the Vine; ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him the same beareth much fruit.' Apart from Him they cannot bear fruit. Apart from them He also cannot have fruit. He has chosen them and appointed them for this purpose—that they should go and bear fruit for Him. And what is the fruit they are to bear? His works that they will do constitute the fruit. When He goes away, however, greater works than His own will they do, because of the all-prevailing power of prayer in His Name, and the mighty co-operation of the Holy Spirit. This Spirit will be their Helper for all time, He will be with them for ever. This same Evangelist gives us Christ's High Priestly Prayer for the brotherhood of His disciples, His Body for all time. 'Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on Me through their word.' This whole Body is one—and for it He prays. These are they whom the Father gives Him out of the world. In them He abides, and they in Him. He pleads that they may be kept from the evil one, that they may be sanctified, that they may continue in His love and joy, and above all **THAT THEY MAY BE ONE**. Why?—'That the world may believe that Thou didst send Me!'

He dies on the Cross, and is raised again. These disciples, men and women, are the persons to whom He appears after His resurrection. This fact was so marked that St. Peter could say afterwards: 'Him God raised up and gave Him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead' (Acts. x. 40). Between the Resurrection and Ascension again He teaches them many things concerning the Kingdom of God. To them as a body He gives His last commission, 'Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name unto all the nations beginning from Jerusalem'. 'Go ye and make disciples of all the nations baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.' (Matt. xxviii. 19).

When the time comes for His Ascension, He promises them the Holy Spirit, saying 'when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, you shall receive power and shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth' (Acts i. 6-8). He leaves them; they return to their old meeting place and continue steadfastly in prayer together with one accord.

On the day of Pentecost, this Church goes through a new experience. It is anointed by the Spirit of God; and thenceforth as a Spirit-filled and Spirit-directed Body it goes into the world conquering and to conquer. In the days of His flesh Jesus had a body through which He 'began to do and to teach'—to proclaim the Kingdom of God. From the day of Pentecost, He still carries on this work through His present Body—the Church.

At the first opportunity, on the day of Pentecost, their leader, Peter, calls upon the Jerusalem crowd to repent, and join themselves with the Brotherhood through the door of Baptism. 'Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins and save yourselves from this crooked generation.' They were to separate themselves from the unbelieving generation that perverted and rejected the message of God, and to join the fellowship of the Disciples. The parting of the ways is now complete; the brotherhood of the disciples thus starts its life as the Church of the Messiah, the saved and saving Remnant distinct from the un-believing Israel. Scarcely a fortnight after their Lord is taken from them, they begin their separate corporate life. They establish henceforth, four characteristics:—

(1) A common *worship*—'continued in the breaking of bread and prayers'.

(2) A common *faith*—'continued in the Apostle's teaching and fellowship'.

(3) A common *life and service*—a life of love to one another and witness to others.

(4) A distinct *organization and discipline* as exemplified in the appointment of Matthias to complete the Apostolic number, and the incident of Ananias and Sapphira. Surely no one can deny that this primitive Church life was in accordance with the Mind of Christ!

There is only one passage to which I should like to go back before we bring this survey to a close. And that is the famous passage in St. Matthew where occurs the word Church. 'Upon this rock will I build my Church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.' St. Peter's confession has just been made—'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

Mason in his *Teaching of Jesus* establishes with great learning that St. Peter's confession is the watershed of the Gospel history. The key-

note of the first period of the Lord's ministry is the parable of the Sower, that of the latter the Vineyard and the Wicked Husbandmen; the first is a time of sowing the word of the Kingdom, the latter the time of the harvest and ingathering men into the Kingdom. The first is a period of appeal to the whole nation of Israel, the second is the period of the consolidation, preparation and equipment of the Remnant—He Himself being its founder and leader. To the first period belongs the proclamation: 'The Kingdom of God is at hand'; to the second period beginning with the recognition of the Messiah by Peter belongs the call to men to come in. Whether the words in St. Matthew are genuine or not, there is no doubt that Peter and his fellow-disciples of whom he was the spokesman and interpreter, and the confession embodying their divinely revealed perception into the true nature of the Messiah—constitute the Rock upon which the Messiah built His church. But, when did He actually build it?

There is another context in which the words: 'I will build' occur and that may answer this question.

False witnesses are cited to have stated before the Council: 'We heard Him say I will destroy this temple that is made with hands and in three days I will build another made without hands' (Mark xiv. 58). St. John who alone refers to the words of our Lord that bear any resemblance to this charge quotes (ii. 19) Jesus as having said: 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.' The Crucifixion and the Resurrection are the pre-requisites of the formal foundation of this temple. According to the same evangelist, on the evening of the Resurrection, Jesus appears to His disciples (men and women as St. Luke clearly shows in xxiv. 33) and breathes on them and says 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost. As the Father hath sent me even so send I you. Whose soever sins ye forgive they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain they are retained.' According to an ancient Hebrew story, God formed the body of the first man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils His Spirit of life and man became a living soul (Gen. ii. 7). Jesus, says this writer, now breathes His Spirit of life into another body, the corporate body of His disciples, and the living Church is created. On the third day after the Jews destroy the temple of His Body, He does indeed build another Temple not made with hands. Thus is born the Church of Christ. As the mystical Body of Christ, it is sent forth into the world on the Resurrection Day to continue the work that He Himself began, the Body which is indwelt and governed by the Holy Spirit and entrusted with the Gospel of Forgiveness.

The survey may now be closed. It only remains for us to gather up in a few sentences the important results of this study of the Church in the Mind of Christ:—

1. The Church of Christ is the continuation of the community of the chosen People of God in the Remnant who recognised Jesus as the Messiah, in crucifying whom, they rejected themselves from their privileged position.

2. This Remnant originally consisted of a few men and women who followed Jesus during His first period of ministry and were convinced that He was the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.

3. To them in the Upper Room He revealed the mystery of His death, to them He introduced the New Covenant, and to them He committed the Sacrament of His Body and Blood.

4. On the Resurrection Day He founded on them God's new Temple, His mystical Body by the inbreathing of His Spirit.

5. The Missionary Commission and promise is given to them during the great Forty days. The good news of Forgiveness of Sins and New life is to be proclaimed by them throughout the world; they are to admit others to their fellowship through the rite of Baptism.

6. On the day of Pentecost this corporate body receives an anointing of the Spirit of God, and from that day on the group becomes a victorious army winning the world for Christ, with a distinctive worship, faith, organization and discipline and a mission of its own.

7. This Church thus continues the work of the Incarnate Lord—it is His new Body through which alone He can now reach the world. It is in the world and to the world as He Himself was during the period of His Incarnate life.

8. If this Church should efficiently carry out this vocation, and the world is to believe in Him, love should characterise the relationship of the members to one another: and the Church should be visibly One as the unseen Father and the Son are One.

Lausanne is certainly right in defining the nature of the Church in these words which may well sum up our findings:—

'God who has given us the Gospel for the salvation of the world has appointed His Church to witness by life and word to its redeeming

power. The Church of the Living God is constituted by His own will. Of this Church Jesus Christ is the Head, the Holy Spirit its continuing life. The Church as the communion of believers in Christ Jesus is, according to the New Testament, the people of the New Covenant; the Body of Christ; and the Temple of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone. The Church is God's chosen instrument by which Christ, through the Holy Spirit, reconciles men to God through faith, bringing their wills into subjection to His sovereignty, sanctifying them through the means of grace, and uniting them in love and service to be His witnesses and fellow-workers in the extension of His rule on earth until His Kingdom come in glory.' 'As there is but one Christ, and one life in Him, and one Holy Spirit who guides into all truth, so there is and can be but one Church, Holy Catholic and Apostolic.'

In a passage in the letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul recites a series of unities that are immediately real and incontrovertible and on them bases his argument to urge his converts to unity in every day life. 'Give diligence' he says 'to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace'. For there is one Body of Christ throughout the world, one Spirit that fills and vitalizes this entire Body, and one Hope of glory towards which the whole Body progresses, one Lord its one Head, one Faith the common bond between each member and the Head, one Baptism the universal sign of this union with Him: the ultimate source of all this unity being the one God—Who is supreme over all, revealed through all and immanent in all—and blessed for ever.

Alas, the facts to-day are otherwise. What is most immediately present to our view is a divided Christendom. Need I say the consequence is a feeble realization of the vitalizing spirit, a dull perception of the Christian Hope, a loose hold on the Lord who loved the Church and gave Himself for the Church, resulting in a loose grip on the faith in the Lord Jesus and in the proclamation of His Cross as the one hope of humanity.

May His Spirit help us during these days, to have a vision of what the Church can be and ought to be for the Lord and for the world, according to the Mind of Christ and may He inspire us with a passion to do all we can to make the vision a practical reality!

V. S. DORNAKAL,

Sacraments in the Life of the Church

I am to try, in fifteen minutes, to put before you the place which the sacraments occupy in the life of those Christians who, in one revision or another, in one language or another, worship by those forms which the genius of Cranmer gave to the English Church at its break with Rome. I have only to say so much to show that a mitigated failure is the best success that I can hope to attain. But I have tried, with the help of others, to avoid all merely personal opinions and to give a fair picture of the ideals of the Book of Common Prayer and of the extent to which those ideals are realized in the Anglican Church today. I have quoted considerably from the Prayer Book for it is in the common possession of that heritage that the whole Anglican communion, for all its apparent divisions, finds a real unity. The ideals of the Book of Common Prayer, however forgotten at one moment or another, constantly reassert themselves. I have spoken little of Indian conditions, for my inexperience would make it presumptuous for me to do so in the presence of so many who can tell so much better how far these movements have affected this country.

First I will speak of Baptism. The normal service is to be public: and, when the Prayer Book said public, it did not mean in church with a handful of relations and friends and no one else present. Baptism is a family affair, but the family concerned is the Church. The child has been born into his or her natural family. Now he or she is to be born into the supernatural family of those who are made members of Christ, Children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the local representation of the supernatural family is concerned. So 'it is most convenient that Baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays, and other Holydays, when the most number of people come together: as well for that the congregation there present may testify the receiving of them that be newly baptized into the number of Christ's Church as also because in the Baptism of infants every Man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in his baptism'. And the administration of Baptism is to take place 'either immediately after the last lesson at Morning Prayer, or else immediately after the last lesson at Evening Prayer'. Now the practice in England has become almost universal of administering Baptism at a special service and it has come to

be looked on as a private service, the concern of the parents and friends alone. It is one of the most encouraging signs of a revival of real thought about methods of work that such a practice is increasingly recognized to be extremely unsatisfactory. There are different ways in which it may be possible to realize the intention of the compilers of the Prayer Book in the conditions of to-day whether in England or in India, and there is nothing to be said for a merely unintelligent carrying out of the letter of 16th Century rubrics: but that the purpose which the makers of the Prayer Book had in view when they wrote those rubrics was right I have no doubt and it is good that renewed attention is being paid to the manner in which we can best arrange the administration of Baptism. There is being a real attempt to make every one concerned feel that baptism is a matter of immense importance and that it is the concern of all the members of the congregation; that 'if one member suffer all the members suffer with it': and that every baptized person who fails to grow up to realize and use the privilege that is his is a weakness and a reproach to the whole Christian body.

I have spoken briefly of Baptism, not because it is of small importance, for I believe it is right to trace a large proportion of our troubles with our adult Christians to our failure to make baptism a real thing, but because time is limited. Now we must consider the second of the two Sacraments of the Gospel, the Supper of the Lord.

The intention of the Prayer Book is clear. This is the supreme act of corporate intercession and thanksgiving. We see this when we examine the occasions upon which there is bound to be, or may desirably be, a celebration of the Holy Communion. We find that this is the service linked with the great events in the life of the Church, of the nation and of the individual. First, the most solemn corporate act of the Church is when it meets to set apart, through the laying on of the hands of the appointed ministers, one or more who have been called and chosen to the ministry. The setting apart in this way of deaconesses, deacons, priests and bishops always takes place at some point in a service of Holy Communion. This is the greatest corporate act of prayer and thanksgiving to God. Then, in the national sphere, the sovereign is crowned in the course of the service of Holy Communion. Once more, this is the supreme act of corporate prayer and thanksgiving. Again if we meet to set apart a church for the service of God, the consecration takes place at a Communion Service or a Communion Service follows next morning.

On these occasions there must be a celebration. There are other more individual events which still show the same purpose in the minds of the compilers of the Prayer Book. It is not possible to insist upon a Communion at great events in the life of the individual, marriage, thanksgiving for child-birth, and sickness, but the desire of the Prayer Book is that, at such occasions people should receive the Holy Communion. So the rubric at the end of the Marriage Service runs, 'It is convenient (i.e. fitting and proper) that the new-married persons should receive the Holy Communion at the time of their marriage, or at the first opportunity after their marriage.' A special order for the Communion of the sick is provided, and so strong is the feeling that the sick man ought not to be deprived of the opportunity of communion because he can get no one to communicate with him that in 1552, the second Prayer Book of Edward VI, a rubric was added 'In the time of the Plague, Sweat, or such other like contagious times of sickness or diseases, when none of the parish or neighbours can be gotten to communicate with the sick in their houses, for fear of the infection, upon special request of the diseased, the Minister may only communicate with him'. This shows both the value which they attached to the Communion and also the essentially corporate nature of the service. Only in such exceptional circumstances can anything be allowed which might suggest that Communion is simply an individual affair. The individual must pray, praise, and receive God's gifts, not simply as an individual but always as an individual who is a member of a community.

So, once more, at the end of the order for the thanksgiving of the woman after child-birth, we find the rubric, 'if there be a Communion, it is convenient (again, proper and fitting) that she receive the Holy Communion'. Here it is especially the thought of this as the great thanksgiving, the Eucharist, that is brought before us. This element is never lacking, but it is clear that e.g. in the Communion of the sick we think more of intercession, while here, after the mother is safely delivered from the dangers of child-birth, our minds will be full of thankfulness to God.

There is one last point in the actual rules that we find in the Prayer Book which teaches the same lesson of the Communion as the great corporate act of the whole Church. That is the penalty of excommunication for great sins. So, in the rubrics before the Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, we read 'And if any of those be an open and notorious evil liver, or have done any wrong to his neighbours by word or

deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended; the Curate, having knowledge thereof, shall call him and advertise him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he have openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former naughty life, that the congregation may thereby be satisfied, which before were offended; and that he have recompensed the parties, to whom he hath done wrong; or at least declare himself to be in full purpose so to do as soon as he conveniently may. The same order shall the Curate use with those betwixt whom he perceiveth malice and hatred to reign'. Those who are refusing to live the Christian life must be kept from the central act of the Christian community. That excommunication is effective throughout the whole Anglican Communion if it is canonically pronounced.

So much for the actual regulations of the Prayer Book. But some of you will want to know, not simply what these century-old rules say, but what really happens. There is an increasing use of the holy Communion in the way in which, as I have tried to show, the Prayer Book intends it to be used. More people do desire to have a celebration of holy Communion at the time of their marriage or do come together to the holy Communion very soon after the wedding. So also it is, I think, undoubtedly true to say that at special occasions for prayer or thanksgiving it is now the natural thing to arrange a service of holy Communion, in a way which would not have been done fifty years ago. You would seldom find now, in England, a diocesan or missionary festival, the anniversary of a Theological College, or the meeting of some great society of which the holy Communion does not form part. It is becoming the natural expression of the Church's corporate prayer and praise. So again, at a time of spiritual conference, such as a retreat or quiet day or in the days when a bishop gathers together those whom he will ordain, it is now very usual, if not universal, to arrange for a celebration of the holy Communion each day.

What position does this sacrament now hold in the day to day life of the Anglican Church? We may look at the attitude of the clergy towards its celebration. Not so long ago, there were clergy who never celebrated the holy Communion for years at a time. It was looked upon as the natural privilege of the senior clergyman present. The old Dean of the Cathedral at my home when I was a boy would have regarded it as an intolerable affront to the dignity of his office if anyone except the Bishop of the diocese had celebrated in the Cathedral in his presence. So, Curates,

in some churches, never celebrated, unless the Vicar was absent. Now it is regarded as obviously right that the privilege of celebrating should be shared among the clergy available in any particular place.

So also there has been a great change in the place that the holy Communion plays in the religious life of the ordinary Christian, since 100 years or more ago. Till the revival of religion that is associated with the Wesleys, in many churches there were only three celebrations a year. Now that would be true practically nowhere in England. Here in South India at least, it would, I think, still be true to say that there are relatively few places where there is a celebration more often than once a month. This is in part due to the number of churches one man has to serve. But one almost assumes that there will be a weekly Communion in most places in England, and in many, one or more during the week or at least one on Saints' Days. So during the student days of men not yet fifty there were college chapels in Oxford where the request for a weekly Communion was met with an indignant refusal: now that is the rule in every one, in almost all there is a celebration on Saints' Days, and in some, in Oxford, and the more, I believe, in Cambridge, there is a celebration every day. It is becoming more and more true that the holy Communion is a regular part of the normal religious life of the ordinary Christian, whereas before it was an exceptional event, and often regarded as the privilege of the older and more established Christians, or even of the gentry alone. As an illustration of this, I think that figures for England would show that the number of those who communicate at Easter and never again during the year, or at the most at Christmas, is a much smaller proportion of the total number of communicants than it was some years ago. We have not yet reached the standard of the New Testament where the brethren naturally meet together week by week for the breaking of the bread, but we have come a great deal nearer to that ideal than we were a century ago, and almost all of us in the Anglican Church would now admit that this is the ideal at which we aim: the ideal, not merely that all our people should communicate each week but that they should be fit to do so, that it should be a true sharing together, in love and charity, of the feast to which their Lord calls them.

A. M. HOLLIS

Nazareth, S. India.

Worship in the Free Churches

Rev. R. ROBERTSON, Coimbatore

This subject should be studied from the points of view of historical influences and of modern tendencies. The methods of Free Church worship have their roots in history. They were not beaten out on the anvil of a Church Council by the collective thought of the day, but rather grew out of the very needs of religious life at its deepest.

In their simplest form they are the spontaneous response to Divine Grace by grateful hearts in adoration and praise, of repentant souls in confession and supplication, and of humble minds hungering for the 'Words of Eternal Life'.

Just as in our most vital experiences of soul uplift, and in our realisation of our most utter need of forgiving love, we all come back to our mother tongue, indeed often to the very form and words we learnt at our mother's knee, so has Free Church worship expressed those elemental songs of the soul and cries of the heart, on behalf of the people gathered for worship, in a simple, direct, and personal way. So arose those exuberant songs of salvation with which we are all so familiar, and that extempore form of prayer in supplication which with all its defects gave men the assurance that they had been heard of God and sent them home blessed in their inmost hearts.

We can the more easily understand this by a reference to their origin. Even before the Lord Jesus ascended to Heaven we see the disciples gathering together in prayer for protection of body and soul in a time of great fear in which they all shared. Later we find them meeting in greater confidence in one another's houses to offer thanksgiving for strength given to witness a good confession, for prayer that through them the Kingdom of the Lord might be extended, and for the breaking of bread in a common loyalty to their one Saviour and Master. It is easy to see how on such occasions their worship would be simple, direct, intimate, fervid.

Extending over the centuries we find them again in times of persecution meeting together for worship to strengthen one another's faith, meeting in little services, often in secret, when a brief, simple, direct,

form of worship would be adopted from the very necessities of the situation.

So also would they have done in England, Scotland, the Netherlands, France, and Central Europe, under the dire persecutions of the Church of Rome. So did they in England when under the Act of Uniformity, and the Five Mile Act, they were compelled to meet in lonely valleys and in sheltered spots on the hillsides in order to worship according to the dictates of their conscience.

With brief time at their disposal, and having to brave all weathers, it was to be expected that such worship should be bare of all embellishments, delve down to the root of the matter, and express the very heart and soul of religion in its most vital form.

A rough climate makes tough bodies, and such a bracing religious atmosphere produced spiritual giants in those days.

From another angle we see the same process at work in more modern times. When the preaching of the Wesleys, a Whitfield, a Moody, a Gipsy Smith, in the market place, on the countryside, in the public hall, and on the battle-field, had pricked men's consciences, broken their hearts by the devastating sense of sin on the one hand and stirred their very souls by the realisation of the wondrous, and tender, and hoily love of God in the Cross of Jesus on the other, and companies of men and women had been gathered into the fold, it was natural that the expression of their new found faith should be shaped by that direct, intimate, revolutionising experience of God that had changed their lives for ever. This whole tendency is illustrated by the directions given for the conduct of a special service arranged for Good Friday in one of the Free Churches: 'Before the Passion begins there shall be a short devotion said by Minister and people in the *natural voice*.'

Is it merely owing to temperament and training, the feeling of many in the Free Churches that that seems the more fitting on so solemn an occasion? And in connection with extempore prayer the vivid impression is worth recording which was made upon a prominent journalist as he dropped into the week night service in the Metropolitan Tabernacle being conducted by Spurgeon: 'It was unforgettable, this intimate, uplifting prayer, voicing the needs and sorrows and temptations of his hearers, with one touching reference to 'the little children now going to rest'.

The Free Church Service represents a great heritage of the individual for direct access to God, the spontaneous expression of the heart's longing, and the sense of the goodness of God shot through with the faith: 'He loved me and gave Himself for me'.

What it loses in ornateness it gains in reality; and what it lacks in stateliness is balanced by its immediacy and glow.

'In the past the Free Church has been called upon to sacrifice the unity of the body for the sake of the conscience of its soul; yet it has preserved the continuity of the faith once delivered to the saints, by its insistence on The Autonomy of Faith, The Freedom of the Church, and The Crown Rights of the Redeemer'. And these have been factors in the fashioning of its simple, direct, and often unembellished forms of worship, and in the building of its churches.

But some modifications have been observed taking place during recent years. It is significant also that there was some change in the observance of the Passover Feast in quieter and more settled times. Whereas the Israelites partook of the feast standing and in haste, we read that Jesus and His disciples reclined at table, which allowed a heart to heart talk challenging loyalty and counselling unity and prayer.

The desire is being expressed to meet the whole religious need of the whole personality in a fuller way than was possible before. Jesus worshipped more in the open air than in temples made with hands, yet He Himself drew inspiration from the flowers and the birds, and saw God's goodness reflected in sunshine and in shower.

When worship shaped under stress of persecution, or as protest against certain errors, changes with the changing conditions into a quiet waiting upon God, none daring to make afraid, there comes the opportunity to make fuller use of the sacrament of the beautiful.

Thus we see to-day a more beautiful type of church building erected the more readily to dispose the mind to worship; the re-institution of instruments in music which the Puritans discarded; the introduction of a part-time liturgy by which the congregation is enabled to take a greater part in public worship.

By the growing together in the larger union of churches we may look forward to the enrichment of worship by the use of whatever has been found helpful to the spiritual approach to God, provided that the human agency and the material symbol will always tend to fade away in the greater realisation of the Master's presence, and like the candle's glow

merge into the light of the Sun of Righteousness. The history of the Free Churches will ever stand as a witness to the power of those forms of worship that serve as a wing to the spirit, and not its cage; and as a protest against such use of symbols that debases a staff into becoming a mere crutch for those who walk the pilgrim way.

Whether the pulpit be retained in the centre or moved to the side, the Free Churches stand for the liberating truth that the Lord is in the midst, and can never be localised at any table or upon any altar, for, 'God is spirit and those that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth'. We may well believe that it was in the providence of God, rather than in the misfortune of war, that the ark of Israel was captured by the Philistines long ago.

The Free Churches in their worship stand also for the evangelical truth that the Lord is not dumb to His disciples, and that worship is twofold. We seek not for ever an unknown and silent god.

When the disciple adores through praise and prayer, the Lord instructs as well as blesses through His holy word. Not only does He offer afresh the water of life to the weary soul, He teaches him also the way he should go. Preaching forms a vital part of worship for the Christian.

By the larger union of the Churches we look forward also to an increasing reverence in the House of God. Where benches are retained the addition of prayer stools would prove of great benefit, for while it is true that God looks upon the heart, yet posture may have a real effect upon the worshipper and upon the stranger within our gates. We ought neither to rush into God's presence nor to be careless when there.

It will be a gain if our church buildings and manner of worship become increasingly indigenous in form, provided that the words of the worship are understood of the people, and it is remembered that the temple of our God is also the House of our Heavenly Father.

Let our worship become more stately, but not so stiff that a little child will not feel at home with Jesus there. Let our buildings become more beautiful, but not so strange that the poor will fear to enter, and the sinner think it to be only a place for the saints. Let our church and worship be such that the stranger will be rewarded when he comes saying 'Sir, I want to see Jesus.'

What the Sacraments Mean to Me

(Notes of an address given at the Ministers' Conference at Pasumalai on Thursday, April 20th, 1933, by Rev. W. H. SPENCER of Shimoga.)

I. BAPTISM

I do not remember my own baptism, but have often seen a note written by my father in the family Bible giving particulars of when and where it took place and by whom it was administered. I accept it as a thing done on my behalf, and willingly undertake to do my best to fulfil the obligations which it implies. I regard myself as having been solemnly dedicated to God in Christ, and admitted to the privileges and responsibilities of the Christian Church. I understand from the teaching of the New Testament that baptism is a symbol of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as administered to me and accepted by me indicates that those great matters should have a place in my spiritual experience, so that I share in the benefits they have brought to mankind. I should live, therefore, as a man for whom Christ has died and risen again; as a man who is availing himself of the cleansing from sin which is available in Christ; as a man who has passed with Christ through death into newness of life. As after the passage of the Red Sea its waters flowed between the Israelites and the land of their bondage, separating them from all further knowledge of it, so should the water of my baptism stand between me and what the New Testament calls the world, a symbol of my separation from it to God in Christ.

II. THE LORD'S SUPPER

Participation in the Supper of the Lord is to me first an act of remembrance. I eat and drink in remembrance of Him, and in so doing bring afresh to my mind His redeeming love. It is also a foretaste and a prophecy of that coming day when we shall sit down to eat and drink with Him in the Kingdom of God. So it looks both backward and forward—backward to the night in which He was betrayed, and forward to the day when He shall return in glory.

And thus that dark betrayal night
With the last advent we unite
By one blest chain of loving rite
Until He come.

I like to think of it too as a memorial before God of the One Sacrifice made once for all by our Lord at Calvary. There are two passages in the Old Testament where God is represented as speaking as though, like us men, He made use of such reminders. The bow was set in the

cloud to remind not only those who look upon it from the earth, but to remind even God Himself, of the Covenant made with Noah. The blood was sprinkled on the posts of the doors with the assurance, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you'. God does not need such reminders, but He uses this language for the strengthening of our faith. In the same way may we not venture to ask God to look upon the memorials and symbols of our Lord's redeeming work which are placed upon the communion table, and to fulfil His promise of grace. As Charles Wesley wrote :—

'With solemn faith we offer up
And spread before Thy glorious eyes
That only ground of all our hope,
That precious, bleeding sacrifice,
Which brings Thy grace on sinners down,
And perfects all our souls in One.'

These words no doubt refer primarily to our pleading of the death of Christ in prayer, but may well be applied also to the memorial supper.

The Lord's Supper is also a symbolic preaching of the Gospel. The whole story of God's provision of grace in Christ for our spiritual needs is set forth in appropriate symbol in the bread and wine upon the table, and in the act of participation on the part of believers. The whole Gospel is there, simply and clearly set forth. The Communion Service is truly evangelical. It is not something reserved for the specially good, but for those who want to be good, and are turning their thoughts toward God's way of making them good. The mother of the Wesleys told her son John that for many years after he began to preach the doctrine of assurance she had found difficulty in accepting it, and had no conscious assurance of her own acceptance with God, until one Sunday at Communion, when the minister, who was her own son-in-law, in handing her the cup said, 'the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee. . .' At the moment she realized that it *was* for her, and found the peace of full assurance. I think that sometimes, not only full communicant members of our Churches, but penitents also might be invited and encouraged to come to the table of the Lord, in the well-grounded hope that they might find there that which they are seeking.

Finally, making one's communion is a testimony and a pledge. The act of approaching the table, and taking the bread and wine, is a public profession of Christian discipleship. One goes away from the table Christ's man, solemnly pledged to Him, committed to His service, re-engaged to the fellowship of His community of disciples, yielded to the claims of His Kingdom.

Clippings

South Indian Reunion

The Cambridge Branch of the A.E.G.M. unanimously passed the following resolution:

'We, the members of the Cambridge Branch of the A.E.G.M., express our thanksgiving to God at the progress already achieved in the South Indian Church Reunion Scheme, and especially for the fact that the fellowship has

found expression in the mutual sharing of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We join with our South Indian brethren in confident prayer for the final realisation of the ideal of union'.

The meeting was attended by a representative body of clergy and laity from the Town and University.

Fears of Critics of Scheme

From 'The Madras Mail', March 11, 1933

Criticism of the S. I. Church Union scheme is made by the English Church Union which states:

'The action of the Indian Episcopal Synod in acquiescing in Bishops and Clergy 'receiving Communion' at the hands of a Minister not episcopally ordained compels us for conscience sake to point out the serious distress thus caused to large numbers of laity and clergy within the Episcopal Church. We are firmly convinced that vast numbers of both laity and clergy would refuse to receive Communion from anyone except a priest. Archbishop Davidson recognised this and discountenanced such reception in the Kikuyu case.

'The action of the Episcopal Synod in India and still more of 20 Bishops in England, who have endorsed its action, has created deep anxiety and distress. We feel this more deeply than we can express in words. Any recognition of such services implies approval of the violation of the constitution of the Church. We appeal to our Father in Christ most earnestly not to inflict upon us a trial which may wreck the unity of the English Church. We are entirely convinced that no local Synod had the right to set aside the ministerial principles and practices of the world-wide church.'—Reuter.

The South India United Church

Extract from 'The Spectator', January 6, 1933

The soundest comment on the discussions, in the columns of *The Times* and elsewhere, on the Church Union movement in South India is Canon Streeter's blunt declaration, in reply to some of his Oxford colleagues, that the Western canonists and Eastern theologians of long ago are not to be invoked as judges in a case which corresponds to nothing in their experience. The plain fact is that Christianity is making headway in India, and that, in the belief of the Protestant missionaries and the Indian Christian leaders, such as the Bishops who were recently welcomed here, and the Indian Pres-

byterians and Baptists, a union of their churches in South India is not merely essential to the prosperity of their work, but the proper and natural translation into practice of the common gospel they all have been preaching. It is a development immensely interesting, immensely important and immensely stimulating. Many Anglo-Catholics would find it hard to identify themselves with such a movement in this country, but it is not too much to ask them to let the South Indian development work itself out unhindered.

Church Union and Co-operation

India's Challenge to British Christianity

One or two interesting points have come to light in connection with the visit to this country last winter of the Indian Mission of Fellowship. The results of the Mission were excellent, both in India and this country, but some impressions of the missionaries are unusually valuable.

For instance, it astonished the people from India to find that there was no existing machinery in this country which could deal with their visit, and that it had to be handled as between the Churches of this country by the representatives of the missionary societies, who alone had any kind of *liaison*. If anyone went from Great Britain to speak to the Churches of India, there would be no difficulty whatever. The whole of the arrangements would be handled—and competently handled—by the National Christian Council of India. But there is no such body here.

That, let it be plainly said, is not merely an accident or an omission. The Indian delegates found themselves in an atmosphere so strange as to be startling and even unnatural. They encountered strong and sometimes almost truculent denominational loyalties, side by side with almost complete and even careful inter-denominational neglect. They felt it, indeed, to be worse than that; denominational loyalty was so vigorous that one of the most outstanding features of British Christianity was the sharp division between different bodies of Christians. This was a real trouble and grief to them. It showed up vividly things they would rather not have seen, and which they found it difficult to understand; for example, how much farther Christianity in India had progressed in fellowship in a hundred years than Christianity in England had in a thousand.

I am not justifying, or explaining, or excusing at this point, only recording. When the Indian Mission arrived, we had to forge a special instrument to enable it to do its work, and to repeat the process in every city and town to which it went. Not that there was any particular unwillingness about it. But it does reveal a rather pitiful weakness in the Churches of this country. They have practically no machinery for doing things together, and seem so rarely to have seen the necessity or the desirability of doing things together. I know of the

existence of the National Free Church Council. It has its own place and functions. But it does not begin to be adequate for the purpose I have in my mind. In any case, it does not include the Anglican Church, and I must also take the risk of being misunderstood when I say that to some of us it is occasionally apt to look rather too much like an offensive and defensive alliance. What is really needed is a Council of Christian Churches, which could act for them on all sorts of questions, mobilise them when necessary on great moral issues, unite them practically for service, and act as a standing committee of reference and counsel.

* * * *

The humiliating truth is that the visit of the Indian Mission of Fellowship has thrown into glaring prominence the abject poverty of the religious life of England on the side of union and fellowship. One of our sins is that we are all moving too complacently along our narrow denominational grooves, largely ignorant, and content to be ignorant, of one another. When we have any reactions at all towards one another, they are, as often as not, those of jealousy. It is not realised that there is enough power in the Churches of this country, if they were united for service, to pull down the strongholds of sin and make ready a highway for God.

Put all this alongside the common experience and practice of many of the Churches abroad. It is supposed that the South India Union Scheme grew out of a vacuum? No doubt there is some truth in the argument that conditions in India or China have forced Christians to make common cause. Faced with the tremendous problems of their work and the significance of the non-Christian hosts which surround them, they have felt that they must unite or lose much of the impetus and the result of their work. That is not, be it said, the only or the chief reason for their co-operation. But, coming together in this way, they have discovered how much men and women of varying spiritual traditions and ecclesiastical backgrounds have in common, and what admirable colleagues they make when co-operation is honestly sought.

They have discovered two other things as well, and of supreme importance. First, how

astonishingly far people like Anglicans and Methodists and Baptists (bristling with points of difference) can go together in united service for the Kingdom of God. And second, that once you have begun, you neither desire nor dare to call a halt on that road of co-operation which leads by almost imperceptible steps towards union.

In this country there is more talk—I had almost said chatter—about union than even patient people can always tolerate. It really leads nowhere that I can discover, or if it leads anywhere, it leads to another of our famous and historic reaffirmations on the part of all parties, of those principles which, while the parties are most anxious for union, must be adequately safeguarded, etc., etc., etc. Anybody can finish that kind of sentence, and apparently anybody mostly does.

Last July I was in Herrnhut for the meetings of the International Missionary Council. I had not been forty-eight hours in that haven of pious and charming folk before I found myself asking, with bewilderment and almost with terror, what evil destiny or folly had made it possible for people like them to go to war with people like us. Yes, I know

all the common answers to that problem. I have heard them so often that I could repeat them without error. But not one of them touches the central and knottiest point of all. And, similarly, I ask why ardent Christians of four or five different communions in India should come to this country on a Mission of Fellowship, and return, if with many happy memories, yet also with a poignant sense of frustration in some of the work of the Churches here because they have not learned, and apparently do not want to learn, to know one another and to work together.

The Church of Christ in India and China, faced with hostile religions and the threat of secularism, is finding, through its many branches, unity in service and thus in life. The Church in Great Britain is faced with the hardest problems and the most serious menace of its history. For that reason, and because co-operation itself is surely in the line of God's purpose, it is time we learned that the way to union is a road to be trod, and not merely a fantastic and unreal exercise in map-drawing after the manner of the geography of a fairy-tale.

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